



Governor Kim Reynolds
Lt. Governor Adam Gregg
San Wong, Director

ICSAA

Iowa Commission on the Status of African-Americans

Iowa Commission on the Status of African Americans
3rd Quarter Meeting
May 15, 2020
1:00 – 3:00 PM
Teleconference
Due to Coronavirus Pandemic (COVID 19)

Teleconference instructions:
Conference call in number: 1-866-685-1580
Conference code: 5152813855

Minutes

Call to Order at 1:15 p.m. by chairperson Dr. Ahmadu Baba-Singhri

Welcome/Introductions

Present: Ahmadu Baba-Singhri, Lynn Sutton, Ken Morris

Absent: Rosalind Fox, Matthew Gibson, Monica Mead, San Wong, ex-officio

Staff: Kim Cheeks, Monica Stone

Visitors:

Sharell Soliveras, Iowa Total Care

Arnold Woods

Dr. Jessica Williams, Dentist from Fairfield, IA

Approve Minutes of April 30, 2020

Sutton motioned to approve the minutes of April, 30, 2020, Morris 2nd the motion, approved unanimously.

Old Business

Impact of COVID 19 on Black Iowa

Due to the questions and discussion brought forth from the April 30 meeting, the commission decided there needed to be a response to the concerns of the community.

Sutton – stated an addition was needed to address the health issues of those in the African/African American communities, especially, chronic health issues, such Diabetes, Heart conditions, needs to be added to the letter drafted to Gov. Reynolds by Dr. Baba-Singhri.

Cheeks suggested and read the draft letter in its entirety.

Baba-Singhri was not sure how to address the governor in the letter. In Nigeria, excellency is used. Stone recommended use Honorable, and Dr. Baba stated to change to honorable in the draft.

Sutton asked what provisions by the Government have been made for the meat-packing plant in Waterloo?

Stone responded with the Waterloo plant, and some others, after reopening, made the following reconfigurations; installed plexiglass barriers in between workers, due to not being able to make 6 ft. distancing. Locker rooms and lunch spaces, they staggered work times so they're less crowded, and provided some forms of PPE equipment.

Sutton, in Dubuque they are taking temperatures of all workers. If they have a temperature, then they are quarantined for the appropriate amount of time.

Stone said she believes checking temperatures has become standard protocol for all of the plants.

Baba-Singhri shared an individual's experience who tested positive for the virus. He feels the two most important ways to address the virus are either vaccination or a cure.

- The lady was not treated for the virus when she visited the doctor. After the 14-day quarantine, she was ordered to return to work. For fear of losing her job, she returned to work still not feeling well. His concern was because she still was not feeling well, but was ordered to return to work to the same environment, and the potential for her to spread to others. She is also a cancer patient, which made it extra troubling.

Stone pointed out that maintaining the health of the workers is very critical. There are some protections for workers returning to work. If the lady is willing, she can contact the CAS office, and she will point her in the direction of who to call for worker protection and assistance. Iowa Legal Aid, is overwhelmed, however there is information on the DHR website of other resources for help.

Sutton stated why aren't the workers being tested, regularly.

Stone suggested that be another recommendation the commission could include in the draft letter:

- need for post-tests because people have pre-existing conditions
- need for treatment, and who is getting it.

Baba-Singhri said he has observed the Government on television, videos, etc. and feels it should be more concerned about human life, not the economy. Trends are showing most can work from home, however, those that can't, there should be protections in place for them.

Action Plan to address Impact of COVID 19

- Complete the draft letter to the Governor, with added recommendations; post testing and for those with pre- existing conditions.
- Review the letter, and send to the governor by the end of week of May 18-22.

- Motion by Morris to move forward with the letter to the governor with corrections, second by Sutton, approved unanimously.

New Business

None

Public Comment

Dr. Jessica Williams, dentist whose office is in Ottumwa, IA, she is an African American practitioner, wanted to join in to see the larger community concerns about and impact of COVID 19.

Next Meeting – June 2020

Cheeks will send out potential dates for the next meeting.

Adjourn

Motion to adjourn by Sutton, 2nd by Morris, approved unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 2:03 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by,

Kim Cheeks

Kim Cheeks
Recorder